



Chuck Schooner

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17 June 2022

Tēnā koe Chuck Schooner

On 2 June 2022, you emailed the Ministry of Social Development (the Ministry) requesting, under the Official Information Act 1982 (the Act), the following information:

- *Can you please provide the total number of new beneficiaries following the dictatorial vaccine mandates imposed by prime minister. Are you able to breakdown the data as follows and provide in excel format:*
 - *Total Benefits*
 - *Mandate was the reason for the person now receiving the benefit Occupation they were forced to leave - eg nurse, doctor, teacher, construction, MSD worker etc etc*
 - *Can you also state if any of these people were forced to sell their houses - you may or may not have this information.*
- *Can you also please provide total amount of food vouchers provided to beneficiaries since the pandemic began if possible.*

I am unable to provide you with the information requested as the Ministry does not record whether a client is applying for assistance due to a COVID-19 vaccine mandate. As such, I am refusing your request under section 18(g) of the Act, as the information you have requested is not held by the Ministry and I have no grounds to believe that the information is held by another department or Minister of the Crown or organisation.

Regarding the sections of your request relating to the total amount of beneficiaries and the total amount of food grants provided to beneficiaries since the pandemic began, this information is available on the Ministry's website. The Ministry updates their Benefit Fact Sheets every quarter, with the most recent being March 2022, providing information on a range of assistance types for the last five years – including the number of grants and

monetary amounts. These are available at the following link:
www.msd.govt.nz/about-msd-and-our-work/publications-resources/statistics/benefit/index.html.

The principles and purposes of the Official Information Act 1982 under which you made your request are:

- to create greater openness and transparency about the plans, work and activities of the Government,
- to increase the ability of the public to participate in the making and administration of our laws and policies and
- to lead to greater accountability in the conduct of public affairs.

This Ministry fully supports those principles and purposes. If you wish to discuss this response with us, please feel free to contact OIA_Requests@msd.govt.nz.

If you are not satisfied with this response, you have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman. Information about how to make a complaint is available at www.ombudsman.parliament.nz or 0800 802 602.

Ngā mihi nui

Bridget Saunders

Bridget Saunders
**Manager – Issue Resolution
Service Delivery**